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"THE DAYS OF OLD."

A HISTORICAL SERMON

BY

REV. S. L. BATES,

Preached September 29, 1889,

The One Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Anniversary

OF THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

IN

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"THE DAYS OF OLD"

DEUT. 32:7. *Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations.*

It is an interesting fact, that we are never done with the past. However remote, it is continually following us with its silent influences, and putting before us its marvelous lessons. Every individual of the race has a history behind him, in its nature, calculated to buttress his mind and enlarge his soul. In a large sense, we of the present generation, are living in, and developing the lives and thoughts of those who have long since finished their record. And this fact becomes more impressive when we take into account the relation of history to the great author of our being. "All history," it has been truly said, "is but the self-evolution of God in time." For whoever turns back with a reverent spirit to review any given section of the past, is sure to find the evidences of an Infinite Mind developing itself in the progress of humanity, and working out its own gracious purposes.

Hence the peculiar import of the text in its application to us to-day. In the providence of God this church has reached the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of its organization; and it is surely most appropriate that during these anniversary days we take occasion to review the beginning of our church life, so far as we may, and trace its course through the century and a quarter of its existence. This task I now undertake, trusting that I shall so unroll the panorama of these one hundred and twenty five years, as to deepen

in all our minds, the conviction that God was in the beginning of this church, that he is with it now, and will be until its appointed work is finished.

We shall, of course, find in this review reminders of the forces and influences that have wrought in, and grown out of our church life; and let us not fail to find also that the benediction of God rests upon those who reverently "remember the days of old," and "consider the years of many generations." What I shall endeavor to present now is not an ideal church, but the real one as brought to view in the record of the men and women connected with it; and I am sure we shall discover in this attempt that this church has a history of its own, and one too, which is worthy to be preserved and handed down to coming generations. And here, let me observe, that the material from which we must write out our history, is very meager. Unfortunately the records of the church for the first twenty years, were lost at a very early period, so that we have only the merest outline to tell the story of "the days of old." Reflect, my friends, how frail we are that the lapse of years should so blot us out from the memory of men, except as our deeds are properly enrolled. We know but little of the initiatory steps of our church life. We know nothing of the precise date and place of its organization; and yet the records of the town make it certain that the church came into existence, in less than eighteen months after the town was organized. Our survey, therefore, takes us back to the period when this region was well nigh an unbroken wilderness, and hardly deserted by the red men of the forest.

The first settlement in Newbury, according to all authorities, was begun in the spring of 1762, and the town was chartered in March, 1763. At the first meeting of the proprietors of the town, which was held June 13, 1763, at Plaistow, N. H., not less than one hundred miles from their grant, it was voted to "unite with Haverhill in paying a preacher for two or three months, the

coming fall or winter." Their action in thus early providing for the religious nature of the people of the new settlement, was in accord with an ancient custom authorized by law. In colonial times, during the reign of Queen Ann, a statute was enacted by which the towns were empowered to hire and settle ministers, and to pay them a stipulated salary from the public treasury; and this practically continued until the toleration act was passed in 1807. But while this action of the proprietors was a legal transaction, it was especially significant of their own character. Though expecting many privations and sacrifices in their new frontier life, they never once entertained the thought of entering upon it without the enjoyment of gospel privileges. There is no evidence, however, that the provisions of this vote were carried out; and at a meeting of the proprietors, held in Hamstead, N. H., the 1st day of March, 1764, they voted to "assist Haverhill in hiring preaching the next summer at Coos." During that summer the Rev. Peter Powers, of Hollis, N. H., came to Newbury to labor with the people in holy things. In the "History of the Coos County," by Rev. Grant Powers, it is stated that "a church, composed of members from both sides of the Connecticut river, was gathered and organized, through the instrumentality of Rev. Peter Powers, in the fall of 1764." Other authorities are more definite, and date the organization of the church in September of that year; and taking into account the time of Mr. Powers coming to Newbury, and the subsequent action of the church with reference to his support and installation, it is measurably certain that September was the month. But the day of the month an almost continuous search for the last fourteen years has as yet failed to determine. There was at that time but one church in the state, that at Bennington, organized in 1762; the churches nearest were in Boscawen, N. H., on the southeast, and Walpole, N. H., on the Connecticut river, neither of them less than seventy miles from here. It was nine years before any

other church was formed in this county, and seven years before there was any within ten miles of this place. These were indeed primitive days, not only in point of time but in historic events. This church had been in existence thirteen years when Vermont declared itself an independent State, and almost twenty-five when George Washington was first elected President of the United States. Most of the prominent events connected with the early history of our state and county, took place some years after the organization of this church. These were also days of destitution and exposure for the people who were beginning life in these new parts. Think of living in this fair valley, abounding now in the applicant of art and the evidences of comfort, think of living here surrounded by forests and the wild beasts and Indians that inhabited them, with no roads, no mails and no means of travel or communication with other places, then so remote, except by horse back or ox-teams through the wilderness, and on the ice of the river in winter time. Think of it! and thank God that your times are appointed in these days of advanced civilization.*

The houses then were small and built of logs, with but little furniture and that of the plainest kind. Conveniences and comforts were things of which the first settlers of this valley knew next to nothing. But destitute as they were of the appliances of civilized life, they were rich in health, in industry, in good habits and noble purposes, they feared God, and loved his Word, and revered his day; and hence they wanted a church

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* The following incident gives some idea of the isolation of the first settlers here. It happened one year very early in the settlement of the town, that the annual Thanksgiving passed before the intelligence reached this place. Soon after a visitor brought a proclamation with him, which Mr. Powers publically read on the Sabbath, proposing that they observe the next Thursday as Thanksgiving. A member of the church arose and objected to that day saying, "There is not a drop of molasses in town, and you all know how important molasses is for Thanksgiving," His boys he said had gone to "No. 4," Charlestown, N. H., and would be back the first of the next week; and so the Thanksgiving was deferred a week, and then another week, and was kept at last without the molasses.

of their own in the new life which they were beginning, and took prompt measures to provide it.

The records of the town inform us that on the 24th day of January, 1765, about four months after the church was organized, the citizens of the town assembled at the house of Jacob Bayley in a legally warned meeting, and voted to give the Rev. Peter Powers a call to settle with them in the gospel ministry," and "agreed to pay him seventy five pounds lawful money, yearly, so long as they should continue with them in the ministry, and thirty cords of wood carried to his house yearly." In addition to this it was "voted to give Mr. Powers four hundred and fifty dollars, as settlement money, two hundred to be paid in cash, and two hundred and fifty in labor and material to build a house, the whole to be paid within ten months of his acceptance." It was further voted that the selectmen be a committee to inform Mr. Powers of his call and receive his answer, and also to apply to the town of Haverhill to see what assistance they would give in "getting the gospel and supporting the same."

Mr. Powers' acceptance of this call was promptly conveyed to the town, and on the first day of February, a little more than a week after the call was voted, an adjourned meeting was held to hear his answer. At that meeting it was voted that "the installment be on the last Wednesday of the month," and that the "Rev's. Abner Bayley, Daniel Emerson, Joseph True and Joseph Goodhue, with their churches, be a council for said installment." It was also voted that " Jacob Bayley should represent the town at the council which, it was decided should meet "down country where is most convenient." Strange and amusing as this last arrangement may seem to us now, it was nevertheless a necessity of the time. There were then no ministers in all this region, and the people here were therefore compelled to go by their delegation, until they found them. Accordingly Hollis, N. H., Mr. Powers' former home, was

the place thought most convenient, and the neighboring churches were invited to assist in the installation services. On that occasion Mr. Powers preached his own installation sermon, which was afterwards printed with the following title page: "A Sermon Preached at the installation of the Rev. Peter Powers, A. M., for the towns of Newbury and Haverhill, at a place called Coos, in the Province of New Hampshire. By myself. Published at the desire of many who heard it, to whom it is humbly dedicated by the unworthy author. 'Then saith he to his servants, the wedding is ready, go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.' Matt. 22:8, 9."*

Thus organized and equipped, the first and only institution in the new country, the church set forth on her sacred mission. How that mission was fulfilled for the twenty years following, we unfortunately have no records to show. Doubtless, however, there was laid such foundation work as the necessity of the early years demanded, and steps were taken to increase the strength and efficiency of the church in the rapidly growing community. There was evidently some growth, as the names of sixty five members enrolled in a very rude form, as original and early members of the church plainly indicate. Twenty two of this number are known to have been original members, the remaing forty-three having united with the church, as is supposed, within a few years after its organization, or at least some time during Mr. Powers' ministry. In 1790, about twenty-five years after Mr. Powers' installation, three persons had, during these years, been made deacons of the church, viz. Jacob Bayley, Jacob Kent and James Abbott; and without doubt Mr. Bayley and Mr. Kent received their appointment soon after the church came into existence. These things furnish some proof of the primitive vitality and growth of the church. Besides, measures were very early taken by the town, for the

*Historical Sketches of the Coos County. Page 55.

erection of a house of worship. On the twentieth of October, 1764, a short time after the church was organized, at a town meeting held at the house of Jacob Bayley, it was voted to "build a meeting house twenty-eight feet long by twenty-five feet wide;" and on the twenty-fourth day of January following, it was voted that a "meeting-house when built should stand on the plain nigh Dr. Smith's," a short distance from the house now owned by Mrs. C. M. Atkinson. But on the twenty-eighth of February this last action was rescinded, and the location fixed on the plain "nigh Jacob Bayley's, just south of the residence of Mr. Richard Doe at the Ox-Bow. This house was probably built in the summer of 1765, although it has been doubted if it was ever built at all. I was told by the late Mr. Hanes Johnson, for many years a member of this church, and always a resident of this town, that traces of it were distinctly visible as late as the year 1800. It was built of logs and had only the rudest benches for seats. But it seems that it was used for worship only a few years; and here also is evidence of the growth of the church at that early period. The congregation soon outgrew these limited quarters, and hence we find an article in the call for a town meeting in 1770, asking the town to decide "where it will agree to meet on the Sabbath, the spring and summer ensuing;" and another article in the call for the meeting of 1771, requesting the town "to see if it will do anything to the meeting-house." Two or three years later, measures were taken for shingling a frame, near Dr. Smith's, which had just been put up for a meeting house, but which it is supposed was taken down and erected again on the ground opposite the cemetery, and for some years used as the "court house" or the "state house," to which allusion is made in the records of the town, as early as 1776. In their need of a commodious place of worship, the church doubtless met for some time in this building; but only once in the

town documents, as I can find, is it spoken of as the meeting-house.*

During these years, Mr. Powers' congregation was without doubt, continually increasing. Though his field of labor was Newbury and Haverhill, his place of preaching was Newbury, and people came regularly from other towns, to enjoy the ordinances of the gospel. Widely scattered as they were, the members of his congregation were uniformly punctual in their attendance upon the Sabbath services. We can hardly help sighing for the good old times, as we read from the history of the Coos country that "at that day it was considered a sin and disgrace for persons to absent themselves from the place of worship without valid excuse; and that parents were habitually seen going from all the region around, and carrying their children in their arms, to the Johnson village, and returning the same day, and that too, sometimes, when the grass and bushes were wet with rain, and the trees from above, dropped upon them their dewy blessings."

Mr. Powers' labors with the church covered a period of over seventeen years, though for the last year or two of this time, he resided in Haverhill and preached there one-half of the time. The cause assigned for this removal, was his preaching and efforts for the common cause of the colonies, which so awakened the resentment of the tories as to render his life unsafe here. It is probable however that the growing independence of the two towns had something to do with his departure, for many of his friends in Newbury were displeased at this step, and the result was his dismission from the church in 1782, and the ultimate dissolution between the towns of Newbury and Haverhill, in all ecclesiasti-

* Another building was afterwards erected for the purpose of a Court House, or State House, as it was sometimes called, a little south of the Ox-Bow school house; but this evidently was not the one to which allusion is made in the very early records of the town. There are many persons in town who well remember the old court house on the "Ox-Bow Common."

cal matters. As early as December, 1781, a proposition was made by Mr. Powers to Newbury, for "an agreement between Haverhill and Newbury to be separate parishes;" but this was evidently regarded as coming from Haverhill, for the town voted at once to "treat with the town of Haverhill relative to the Rev. Peter Powers, and to settle with him for all arrears in his salary." After preaching a year or two in Haverhill, Mr. Powers went to Deer Isle, Maine, and was pastor of the church there until the time of his death which took place in the year 1800. Every intimation I have been able to get regarding his character, presents him as a man of devout piety and large ability. He came from a family noted for its puritan strictness, and graduated from Harvard College. A recent pastor of the church in Deer Isle, wrote me a few years ago that the records of that church say that he was known in that place as a devout christian, an able preacher and a wise and faithful pastor. That he was widely known and highly esteemed, is evident from the fact that he preached the sermon "Before the General Assembly of the State of Vermont, on the day of their first election, March 12th, 1778," the session being at Windsor. Mr. Powers' text on that occasion was from Matt. 28:18. "And Jesus came and spake unto them saying: All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." His subject was "Jesus Christ the true head of Government."

After Mr. Powers' dismission, in 1782, the church was without a pastor until 1788, and some of the time without stated preaching. Ministers from the nearest churches occasionally preached to the people, and administered the Lord's Supper. The first record now in the possession of the church, was made March 19th, 1784, and reads as follows: "The Church of Christ in Newbury and Haverhill, being destitute of a pastor, and desirous of putting themselves in such circumstances as that divine ordinances may be administered, and church discipline be maintained according to gospel

order, chose Rev. Ebenezer Cleaveland, pastor of the Church of Christ in Landaff, Moderator, and Nathan Goddard, Clerk." Accordingly Mr. Cleaveland presided at most of the church meetings for two or three years, and as the scanty records of those years show, attended funerals, baptized children and received members into the church. Probably he was invited by the church to become their pastor, for in August, 1784, it was voted by the town, "not to settle Rev. Ebenezer Cleaveland with them as their gospel minister." Still it appears that he preached here some portion of the time between 1784 and 1786, as a receipt, given by him to the town in 1780, for nineteen pounds and fourteen shillings for services in preaching, is recorded in the town book of those years. Although without a minister at that period, the people were not indifferent to the interests of the church. At each annual meeting the town appointed a tithing man and voted the sum of one hundred dollars, "to be paid in grain, pork or beef, to hire preaching." Members were added to the church, and several persons owned the covenant and had their children baptized.* Nor was the church lacking in spiritual strength, as may be inferred from the following record of a meeting held January 7th, 1786. "The records of this church during the ministry of Rev. Peter Powers, in this place, being as is supposed by this church, by him carried off and not again to be obtained, in consequence of which nothing of record can be produced to show that a regular church of Christ exists in this place, therefore,

* "Owning the Covenant," was an early practice of the New England Churches, dating back to the middle of the 17th century, or before, by which persons who had been baptized in infancy, and had come to mature years without making a public profession of their faith, were permitted to publicly assume, as their own, the covenant of their fathers, though they did not enter into communion with God's people. The children of such parents, if under fourteen or fifteen years of age when their parents took the covenant, were included in the same, and could be baptized and reputed as members. These children, it was held, were under the watch of the church, and as soon as they attained an understanding of the principles of religion, if their moral character was good, might be encouraged "to lay hold on, and to own their parent's covenant personally." In this way the rolls of the New England churches came, at length, to include the names of large numbers who had not the privilege, either of communing with the church or of voting with it.

voted: That Thursday, the 23d day of February next, be set apart as a day of fasting, prayer and renewing of covenant with God, and that Rev. John Richards of Piermont, and Rev. Asa Burton, of Thetford, be invited to attend and officiate on said day, and that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper be administered on the Sabbath next succeeding said day." The day of fasting and prayer was observed according to this vote, but no minister could be procured to officiate at a communion service, until the second of April following.

At a meeting of the church in November of the same year, it was unanimously voted to invite Mr. Abishai Colton "to take charge of the church as their gospel minister." There is nothing on record to show what Mr. Colton's reply to this invitation was, nor is there anywhere an intimation even, to show that the town ever took any action regarding it; but a receipt, among the town papers, with his signature, bearing date April, 1789, "for what was due him for preaching" in Newbury, shows that he did, for a while, serve the people as their minister. This seems to have been a period, either of unusual prosperity with the town, or of special amendment for neglecting its obligations to its ministers in the past; for only about six months previous to its settlement with Mr. Colton, did it cancel an indebtedness of twenty-four years standing, for thirty-six pounds and twelve shillings, to Mr. Powers for preaching before his settlement as pastor. We can hardly wonder that Mr. Powers considered his life in less danger outside the limits of the town.

Early in February of 1787, the church voted to call Mr. Jacob Wood to become their pastor, and in September of the same year the town concurred with this action, voting a salary of "eighty-four pounds, to be paid in wheat, rye, indian corn, pork, beef, butter and cheese, and a pew in the church yearly, so long as he should continue to be their gospel minister." Besides this they agreed to pay him four hundred and fifty dollars as

settlement money. But this action of the church was far from being unanimous, quite a number of voters preferring to purchase a parsonage instead of paying Mr. Wood the settlement money. This difference of opinion naturally retarded Mr. Wood's answer to his call; and it was not until the town, at his suggestion, yielded to the opposition, that his decision was reached, and arrangements were made for his installation, which took place January 7th, 1788. Mr. Wood entered upon his work under favorable circumstances, and as it seems, with much enthusiasm on his own part. During the first month of his pastorate, cases of discipline occurred for intemperance, slander and Sabbath breaking, and various measures were taken for increasing the efficiency of the church. His ministry, however, was brief, for on the 10th of February, 1790, a little more than two years after his installation, it was terminated by his death. Mr. Wood was born in Boxford, Mass., in 1757, and graduated from Dartmouth College in 1778. From 1779 to 1782, he was preceptor of Moore's Indian Charity School" at Hanover, N. H. From that time until he came to Newbury, it is said that he was tutor in a private family somewhere in the State of Connecticut. His remains lie buried in our village cemetery. The first notice of his preaching, so far as can be found, was in a revival of religion at Hanover, when Rev. Dr. Eden Burroughs, then pastor of the church there, was a part of the time assisted by him. He was described then as a "most terrific preacher," one who "was looked up to with the greatest respect and reverence. Some however thought that he knew more about Sinai than Calvary, where the law was magnified and made honorable." Although he died at last in great darkness of mind, there were large numbers who felt that they had been greatly edified and blessed by his labors. Mr. Wood's death was a serious bereavement to the church and community, and they expressed their appreciation of him and their sympathy with Mrs. Wood, by generously providing for

the funeral expenses. I quote the following from the record of a town meeting, held some two months after, not because it is quaint and amusing, but because it shows the kindness and simplicity of life in those "days of old." "Voted that Col. Thomas Johnson be allowed eighteen shillings for providing for the ministers at Mr. Wood's funeral; that Dudley Carlton be allowed six shillings for a coffin; Timothy Swan, six shillings for digging the grave; Frye Bayley, six shillings for attendance; and Col. William Wallace, seventeen shillings for two yards of crape, and for making up the same, twenty-eight pence, and for sundry articles for Mrs. Wood, which amounts in the whole to three pounds, six shillings and one penny."

During Mr. Wood's ministry, active measures were taken by the town to erect a new house of worship. The matter had been agitated since 1785, and a few weeks previous to his call to the pastorate, it was voted to build a meeting house on the "Little Plain,"* and committees were appointed to provide materials and carry their plans into execution. A month later the town assembled to "sell the pew-ground at public vendue to the highest bidders." At that meeting forty-seven pews were sold at prices ranging from twenty-two to fifty-five dollars. Jacob Bayley paid the highest price and took four pews, his whole purchase amounting to one hundred and fifty-one dollars. It is probable that the work of building began early the next spring, but as the frequent records of the town at that time indicate, it went forward slowly, and was not accomplished until sometime in 1790. In September, 1789, the town met for the sale of pews in the gallery, and thirty-five pews were then disposed of. Col. Thomas Johnson, who already owned a valuable pew on the ground floor, took two pews and paid fifty-three bushels of wheat for them. One of the conditions of the sale of these pews was that "two bush-

* The land between the railroad arch and Montebello Mountain was sometimes called the "Little Plain."

els of wheat be paid in advance for every pew sold, "the remainder to be credited as paid from time to time, on notes payable the first day of January." This was probably but a short time before the house was completed. I can no where find any intimation as to the time when the new meeting-house was first occupied. The only allusion indeed, which suggests that it was ready for use in those years, was a vote of the town in 1791, that "John Foster shall have twenty shillings, if he take good care of the meeting-house and keep it swept clean." This indicates that the house was used at that time; and the pay which John Foster received, was probably the full equivalent for the services he performed, for up to this time and for several years after, the people never knew such a thing as artificial heat in their meeting-houses. Their only protection from the winters cold there, were the old-fashioned foot-stove and a profound interest in the worship of God. It is worthy of mention that this was the first meeting-house in the state that had a steeple. The parsonage which was to be provided with the settlement money, at first voted for Mr. Wood, was probably built soon after his installation. It was located on the highest land just south of the cemetery, some rods from the street, at the point doubtless where there are still traces of cellar. It was not long occupied as a parsonage however, for the records of the town show that it was sold soon after Mr. Wood's death. Provision was then made for the minister's residence in the house now owned and occupied by Mr. James Laurie.

Our review of the early history of the church has now covered a period of a little more than twenty-five years. During this time the church had grown with the community until it occupied a commanding position among the people of this and other towns. Possessing much vitality of itself, it had from the first received the fostering care of the town. It is interesting indeed, to note the thoughtfulness of the entire community in looking after its welfare and assisting the people to receive

its benefits. Very early in the history of the town it was voted that "Richard Chamberlain take charge of the ferry by his house, and allow the use of his boat," a log canoe, "on the Sabbath for Newbury and Haverhill to pass and repass to the public worship of God." Occasionally the taxes for preaching had been remitted "to those who lived two miles from the place of meeting," and "those who lived beyond Wright's Mountain had been exempted from the preaching rates." At almost every meeting of the town, the citizens had taken some action relating to the interests of the church. They had appointed tithing-men, raised money for the support of preaching and in a general way had considered the religious welfare of the people. And now at the close of the first quarter of a century of the church's existence, it had provided a parsonage and built a second house of worship. The church, therefore, although at that time bereft of a faithful and beloved pastor, had reached a period of greatly increased prosperity. How she used the strength she had acquired and the opportunities that were opening, the subsequent history will tell us.

On the 17th of November, 1790, a council, of which Rev. John Richards, of Piermont, N, H., was moderator, and Rev. Asa Burton, D. D., of Thetford, was Scribe, installed Rev. Nathaniel Lambert, a native of Rowley, Mass., and a graduate of Brown University, pastor of the church. At that time only five other churches had been formed in what is now Orange county, viz.: those in Thetford, Vershire, Randolph, Brookfield and Chelsea; and there were but thirty-nine other churches all told, in the State. North of Newbury, on either side of the mountain, there was but one church in the State, that at Hinesburgh, and the nearest church in New Hampshire was Piermont, organized in 1771. The population of the town was rapidly increasing, numbering two years later eight hundred and thirty-two; roads were being opened and school districts formed throughout its

limits, and all the adjacent country was fast being settled. The church was now extending its influence into other regions, and during Mr. Lambert's ministry, as in subsequent years, it was often represented in councils called to assist in organizing other churches, ordaining and installing ministers, and adjusting cases of discipline. In the administration of its own affairs, it aimed at method and progress. June 23, 1792, the three deacons were chosen a committee to assist the pastor in cases of discipline. On the same day it was voted that each brother pay three shillings to the treasurer of the church to procure certain utensils for the sacramental table, with which two flagons were afterwards purchased. Steps were often taken for the peace and purity of the church. The character of applicants for admission, especially when they were strangers, was carefully looked into, and arrangements were made for preaching at West Newbury the fourth Sabbath of each month, and at Wells River every second Sabbath of each third month.

But the course of the church in these years was not altogether smooth, nor were its affairs, as it seems to us now, always judiciously administered. Beginning in 1793, and continuing through a period of four or five years, a complicated trouble existed between the churches in Newbury and Haverhill, the latter having been organized in 1790. Two brethren of the church in Newbury, residing in Haverhill, obstinately refused to pay their "preaching rates" assessed by that town, on the ground of dissatisfaction with the minister. For this they were imprisoned by the authority of the town, and shortly after, as the charge states, they "escaped from prison in an unlawful manner." The offense was duly communicated to the church in Newbury, which promptly pronounced them guilty and placed them under censure. But this was afterward recalled on the ground, as rumor stated, that "it was unpopular in the

place," and the offending brethren were restored to good standing. This step was followed by a prolonged correspondence between the two churches. A mutual council was often asked by the church in Haverhill, and as often refused by the church in Newbury. In 1795 several ministers in the region united in addressing a letter to the church, strongly censuring them for the course they had pursued, and entreating them to adopt christian measures for adjusting the case. At length a council composed of the Tabernacle church in Salem, Mass., and the churches in Sanbornton, N. H., and Lyme, N. H., was called by the churches which had censured this church, and met at the house of Rev. Nathaniel Lambert, August 19, 1796. Its deliberations were long and prayerful, and its results wise and judicious. It "found the case very embarrassing, inasmuch as the steps of discipline taken by the church in Newbury, seemed to have been so faulty as to prevent desirable results. The whole course of the church," it appeared to them "had been unstable and contradictory." In regard to a proposition from the church in Haverhill that the church here be excommunicated from the sisterhood of churches, they expressed the opinion that "although there appeared to be a great spiritual languor and weakness in the church in Newbury, and the things that remain are ready to die, yet considering that they have an able and faithful pastor, and there yet remains with them some evident struggle for reformation, they ought by no means to be excommunicated or deprived of the aid and support of their sister churches." To all concerned it recommended "the exercise of mutual faithfulness, watchfulness, humility, meekness, love and forbearance." Among other things, it said to the church in closing: "Permit us to exhort you in the words of the Great Head of the church: 'Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die. Remember therefore how

thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent.' Let the awful commination by which this advice was enforced, lie with weight on your minds: 'If therefore thou shalt not watch I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come on thee'." Soon after this the church took regular steps of discipline with the offenders, restoring one to a confession of his sin and an orderly walk with the brethren, and excommunicating the other, who obstinately refused to confess any offence against the people in Haverhill, although he acknowledged the sin of intemperance. This protracted dissension constitutes a dark page in the experience of the church, but in fidelity to history it cannot be suppressed.

Mr. Lambert's ministry extended through a period of nearly nineteen years. He was dismissed by council April 4th, 1809, but as he was clerk of the church until February, 1811, it is to be inferred that he resided in town some time longer, and perhaps occasionally preached to the people. The immediate cause of his dismission was an unpardonable delinquency on the part of the town, in paying his salary. Early in 1809 it was found that the town was owing him eleven hundred and fifty dollars. It was at once voted to pay this sum and join with Mr. Lambert in calling a council for the purpose of his dismissal, though he himself did not solicit it. This was surely a strange method of amending such neglect. The church evidently thought so, for it was reluctant to concur with this action, and voted to ask the advice of the council selected by Mr. Lambert and the committee of the town; and the council expressed regret at finding itself under the necessity of advising his dismission, and was glad to learn that "no charge was brought against him that could in any way affect his ministerial, his christian or his moral character." It is not pleasant to read from the records of the town that he did not obtain the whole of what was due him

at his dismission until three years later, and then only by bringing legal action against it for seven hundred dollars. Aside from his ministerial labors, Mr. Lambert performed many useful services for the place and people. Through his efforts a library association was formed and incorporated during his ministry. Among the first books purchased by the association, most of which were selected by him, were such works as Paley's Philosophy, Lathrop's Sermons, Morse's Geography, Minot's History of Man and Goldsmith's Rome. After leaving Newbury, and beginning with 1811, Mr. Lambert was for more than nine and a half years pastor of the church in Lyme, N. H., and continued his residence there until his death in 1838, eighteen years after his pastoral relation there was dissolved.

From 1809 to 1821, the church was without a pastor and some of the time without preaching. During most of these years Rev. David Sutherland, of Bath, N. H., acted as moderator, and he and others occasionally administered the Lord's supper and received members into the church. Late in 1816, Rev. John Ford, of Piermont, N. H., was invited to take charge of the church as its pastor. His final answer to this call, which was delayed a few months on account of ill health, is indicative of the state of the church at that time. Alluding to the importance of the stated and continued observance of the gospel, in every community, "especially in one so populous as that of Newbury," and expressing the fear that his health would greatly interrupt his labors, he declines the invitation, adding: "If I am not misinformed, it is the determination of the people at Newbury not to make any exertion to obtain preaching, so long as there remains any reason to conclude that I shall eventually become their minister. I may be wrong, but it appears to me that it is an ill compliment, paid to Christ as Head over all things to his church, betraying a want of deep-rooted affection to the

gospel itself. Is it not saying in effect. we are of Cephas and none but Cephas shall preach to us? Eternity is at hand, and none of us can have heard or enjoyed too much of Christ before we are encircled in it." He closes by expressing the hope that Christ, rather than he, may be the bond and centre of their union.

Sometime before the year 1819, probably a few months previous, there was organized what was called the "First Christian Society in the town of Newbury, for the purpose of supporting the preaching of the gospel," and thus the general charge of church interests were taken into the hands of their more immediate friends. The earliest records of this society indicate that at the outset it was composed of fifty-five members; and before the close of the year 1821, ninety-eight members were enrolled. Its first meeting was held January 7th, 1819, when Asa Tenney was chosen Moderator, and Joseph W. Kittridge Clerk. The late Timothy Morse, for many years an active member of the Methodist church in this place, after its formation in 1827, was the last clerk of the society, serving it from December, 1823, to May, 1835, when it was disbanded.

But this period of vacancy in the pastorate of which we are now speaking, was not without tokens of the Divine favor. Frequent additions were made to the church, and in the Spring of 1819, there was a precious revival in the place under the labors of Rev. Henry Woodard, a Missionary to India, one of the results of which was the addition of thirty new members, on the 24th of July in that year. Deacon William Burroughs, then clerk of the church, after recording their names in the church book, wrote: "It was a very solemn and interesting sight to see thirty persons come forward to join with the Lord in covenant." In October of the same year, seventeen persons united with the church, Rev. Grant Powers, of Haverhill, officiating in

the service. It is possible that Mr. Ford's advice to the church, to "make Christ the bond and center of their union," prepared the way, in some measure, for this gracious visitation. Still the church did not remit its efforts to procure a minister. Early in the year 1820 it was voted to unite with the society in giving Mr. John Walker a call to its pastorate. What his answer to this call was the records of the church nowhere give any intimation. It is certain, however, that he did not accept it, for on the first day of January, 1821, the church and society united in extending a unanimous invitation to Rev. Luther Jewett, M. D., then of St. Johnsbury, to become their pastor. With characteristic promptness Mr. Jewett's reply was soon conveyed to the church, and was expressed with a conciseness that was also characteristic of him. Alluding in a few words to the action of the church he said: "I am ready to take the pastoral care of the same if the Lord will. Yours in the best of bonds." Mr. Jewett was a native of Canterbury, Conn., and a graduate of Dartmouth College in the class of 1795. In the year 1800 he became a resident of St. Johnsbury, where he spent a large part of his life preaching, practicing medicine, and editing the "Farmer's Herald," the first newspaper printed in St. Johnsbury. From 1816 to 1819 he was a member of Congress, and for many years was a personal friend of Daniel Webster, with whom he corresponded to the close of his life. He was a man of rare talent, and many of his public addresses were of such marked importance that they were printed in pamphlet form. His ministerial work in Newbury was conducted with great ability and was attended with special fruit. Seventy-two persons were received into the church, and all but eight on profession of their faith. Soon after entering upon his labors here he prepared, and the church adopted the articles of Faith and Covenant which were used by the church until 1876. Their clear

and terse expressions are indicative of his earnest, faithful work in the pastorial office. In the records of the church during his ministry, we find the first mention of the observance, by this church, of the monthly concert of prayer for the conversion of the world, and of attemps at benevolent work by its members outside their own field. Contributions were made in 1821 to the "Vermont Education Society, in the easterly part of Vermont," and for the mission among the Indians, amounting in all to $18.43. In 1822, $12.68 were contributed to the American Board, a receipt for which is on file among the church papers. "It was collected," as the receipt says, "for heathen females in India, to be expended by Rev. Mr. Woodard, for their benefit." Other sums were contributed this same year and the two years following, amounting in all to nearly $100.00, but no record of this department of church work was kept in those years after May, 1824. In 1823 the church voted in one of its meetings, that the male members of the church associate themselves in a Library Society, and adopted a constitution then read to them, but no trace of this society either in records or books can be found at the present time. On account of ill health Mr. Jewett ceased to officiate as pastor in February, 1825, but he was not dismissed until February, 1828. He was succeeded by Rev. Clark Perry, whose installation took place June 4th of the same year, Rev. Baxter Perry of Lyme, N. H., preaching the sermon and Rev. David Sutherland offering the installing prayer. Mr. Perry remained with the people seven years, and these were years of faithful labor on his part, and rich fruitage for the church. Few men, comparatively, have ever been more zealous for the Master's cause, and more watchful for the welfare of souls. With great fidelity he extended his labors into the remote parts of the then wide field, and held forth the word of life to all the people. During the seven years of his ministry, one hun-

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dred and ninety-one members were admitted to the church, one hundred and forty-five on profession of their faith. Mr. Perry was a native of Worcester, Mass., and a graduate of Harvard College. He was dismissed from his pastorate here June 15, 1835, mainly on account of inadequate support.

The church was now without a pastor until January of the following year, when Rev. George W. Campbell, then of Bradford, was installed to that office. Just three weeks before his installation, and a few months after he had begun his labors among the people, the second and present society for the support of the gospel in connection with the church was organized. Its first officers were John Buxton, President; Joseph Berry, Clerk; Joseph Atkinson, Collector of Taxes; Freeman Keyes, Treasurer; Abner B. W. Tenney, John Buxton, Nathaniel Niles and Jonas Tucker, Prudential Committee. For the last ten years the expenses of the church had been met by general subscription, but now the church was put on a stronger and more systematic financial basis; and when Mr. Campbell entered the pastoral office, the outlook was peculiarly bright. Nor was his administration of the affairs of the church disappointing to the people. In the light of the present it seems to have been eminently wise and successful. His field was a wide one and required much hard labor. Public services were held in west Newbury and Wells River at stated times; meetings for conference and examination of candidates for membership were regularly observed in several school districts of the parish; and not unfrequently members were received at meetings held in the remote parts of the town. The following are some of the aims definitely proposed by Mr. Campbell, as indicated by the records of the early part of his ministry: the appointment of two brethren to attend meetings in the various parts of the town; a sense of individual responsibility on the part of each member of the

church; faithfulness of parents in catechising their children; a careful reading of the covenant by each member of the church every Saturday night. Early in 1839 it was voted by the church, "that it is inexpedient to make any change in the regular services, for attending funerals, except in extraordinary cases, and of such the pastor and the committee are to decide." The affect of this action upon the funeral customs of the people has been felt down to the present time. In 1840 a branch of the church was established at Wells River, whose members adopted the articles of faith and covenant of the parent church, and put themselves under its watch and care, appointing a moderator and clerk who should lay its doings before the church at least once a year; and in January, 1842, this branch was organized into an independent church. In 1840 the church and society built their third house of worship, which was dedicated November thirteenth of that year, Mr. Campbell preaching the dedication sermon. In 1843 the present vestry building was erected, but in form somewhat different from what we see at the present time. Its dimensions were thirty-six feet long by twenty-six feet wide, its length being considerably less than now. In its internal arrangements it had an upper and lower room, the latter having much lower walls than at present. Subsequently the building was enlarged, and the proportions of the audience room were changed; and within the memory of most of us an addition was made which has greatly increased the convenience and usefulness of the entire building. On the original subscription list are the names of forty persons who paid sums ranging from two to upwards of forty dollars. It is easy to detect on this list the anxiety and purpose of the people to have what they proposed, viz.: "A sufficient tenement to be kept and devoted to the various purposes of religious, moral and social meetings."

Mr. Campbell's pastorate here terminated July 9th,

1851. Sometime in 1845, the late Rev. George H. Atkinson, D. D., then a member of this church, and a student in Andover Theological Seminary, sent a communication to the church through the late Deacon Freeman Keyes, from which I infer that as early as that time the question of dissolving the pastoral relation had in some way arisen. I quote the following from this letter, both because of its appropriateness then, and because it is the expression of one whose memory we fondly cherish. Alluding to the decision about to be made by the church, and to the importance of a permanent and harmonious pastorate, he says:

"In view of the value of permanent pastoral influence, I deprecate the removal of one who can be retained in his office. I cannot for a moment entertain the thought that money is to be weighed in balancing the question. How can it be that a few dollars which God hath put into the hands of Christians, can be withheld by them, when his cause, the welfare of immortal beings, is depending upon its free and joyful return to him who gave it? In the light of eternity, money is to be counted as dross; religious influence, the salvation of souls, as gold in value. If then, dear brethren, the question is to be decided on your part, on the ground of the pastor's support, I have confidence that you will say: 'Here Lord are we and the treasures which thou hast given us. We freely devote them to thee, we gladly bring our offerings of that which thou hast given us, we are willing to deny ourselves any earthly gratification if thy cause may thereby be promoted.' Brethren, if any other reason operates in your minds, if there is not mutual confidence between pastor and people, it is a difficulty which can be obviated. Take a few different views. Look over the past, look forward a few years. Assume in thought the pastoral office, and from that position look upon yourselves, the church and the world. I doubt not that all will then rejoice to co-operate with the pastor in

building up the walls of Zion and extending the Redeemer's kingdom."

Mr. Campbell was born in Lebanon, N. H., in 1794. He graduated at Union College, and at Princton Theological Seminary. His ministry here extended through a period of fifteen years and a half, ending July 9th, 1851. After his dismission from this church, he lived two years in Haverhill, N. H., and then went to Bradford, Mass., where he died February 2d, 1869.

On the same day of Mr. Campbell's dismission from this church, and by the same council, Rev. Artemas Dean was installed as its pastor. His ministry and those following it, are within the memory of many now living, and as the records of these years have been kept with considerable care, it is not necessary that I enter into the details of them. During his ministry a melancholy event occurred which is worthy of special mention. On Sunday morning, January 13, 1856, the church edifice was destroyed by fire. Not disheartened by this loss however, the society immediately set about the erection of another, and early in the ensuing fall were enabled to complete the present house of worship, which was dedicated September 23d, 1856. Mr, Dean was dismissed March 31, 1857, some less than six years from the time of his installation.

On the 31st of December of the same year, Rev. Horatio N. Burton, D. D., a man known and beloved by the churches in New England and the west, was installed pastor of the church, and remained with it a little more than eleven years. During his ministry one hundred and fifteen persons were added to the church; and as the minutes of the General Convention of Congregational Ministers and churches, for those years show, the benevolent contributions of the church were greatly increased. The amount reported in 1858, was $191, and in 1868 it was $730. In February, 1867, twenty-one members were dismissed and organized with others into

the Congregational church in West Newbury, thus constituting the second church that has gone out from this. From Dr. Burton's pastorate to the present one, which formally began January 16th, 1872, though really two months earlier, the church had three or four ministers, each serving for a short time only. The most prominent of these were Rev. Geo. B. Tolman and Rev. A. T. Deming, men of rare gifts and graces, both of whom have been removed to the perfect church above. The present pastorate is fast approaching the close of its eighteenth year. Through the faithful co-operation of the people with the pastor, the work has moved forward during these years with a harmony and success as great as is common among the churches. One hundred and seventy-eight persons have been received into the church,and the important work of christian benevolence has been maintained with a regularity and result equal to any previous years. Besides the addition to the vestry, the society has procured a valuable pipe organ and a fine piano for use in public and social worship, and important improvments on the church property have been made almost every year. The church has also been the recipient of several valuable gifts. In the spring of 1872 this pulpit and its chairs were presented by the late Mr. Edward Hale and his brother Mr. Joshua Hale of Newburyport, Mass., and about the same time, the communion table and the two chairs belonging to it, also the two flagons, the two plates and the baptismal bowl in our communion furniture, were given by former members of the church, the late Mr. Charles Atkinson and his wife, Mrs. Eliza Atkinson. The following item from the church records, presented as a resolution by the late Deacon D. C. Kimball in August, 1872, and adopted by the church by a full vote, will suggest to coming generations something of the interest which these friends and others also have felt in the church of their early years. "Whereas this church have

received repeated gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Charles Atkinson, therefore, resolved that we express to them our hearty thanks for their kindly interest in us, as expressed by these gifts."

In concluding now our survey of "the days of old," let us note a few facts that may have some bearing on the days that are to come. In the one hundred and twenty-five years of its existance the church has had nine pastors, only one of whom has died while serving it. Let coming generations be taught so to respect the permanency of the pastorate, that when the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the church shall be observed, not more than twice this number of names, at the most, shall be recorded as its pastors in all the years of its existence. Again, the strength and efficiency of the church have been greatest when its work has been directed by the spirit of the Lord, rather than by public sentiment, and also when its financial interests have been cordially cared for; and here is the lesson at this point: "Seek first the Kingdom of God," and look steadfastly unto Jesus for leadership. A few items should also be added. Besides the two brethren now serving in the diaconate, Sidney Johnson, chosen in 1882, and Daniel P. Kimball in 1883, the following persons have held the office of deacon, and all save one, served with great fidelity until their departnre to the church triumphant or to another place in the church militant.

Jacob Bayley,	chosen	before	1790,
Jacob Kent,	"	"	"
James Abbott,	"	"	"
Jeremiah Ingalls,	"	in	1803
William Burroughs,	"	"	1812
John Buxton,	"	"	1819
James Brock,	"	"	1835
Jonas Meserve,	"	"	1853
David Wells,	"	"	1853
Freeman Keyes,	"	"	1853

George Burroughs, " " " 1869
Joseph Atkinson, " " 1872
Henry H. Deming, " " 1872

Although Jeremiah Ingalls was deposed from office and excommunicated from the church, his name will long be held in grateful remembrance by all the churches which have used his musical compositions in their worship. He was the author of the inspiring old tune "Northfield," and many other of like character, which, for nearly a century have animated the devotions of God's people.* This church has also rendered important service in sending out laborers to other fields in this and other lands. The following persons, who were either natives of Newbury, or members of the church, or residents of the town who received the nurture of the church, have become ministers of the gospel:

Rev. Moses P. Clark, Rev. Marshall Southard, §Rev. Josiah Obear, §Rev. Alvi T. Twing, §Rev. Enoch Bailey, not a member; Rev. John Ayres Avery, not a member, Rev. Harry Brickett, Rev. George H. Atkinson, D. D., Rev. Henry Ruggles, Rev. Frank D. Ayer, D. D., Rev. Joseph Chapman, Prof. Geo. N. Abbott, a licentiate; Rev. Wm. F. English.

I have thus endeavored to trace the history of this church through the years of its "many generations;" but at the most it is only an outline of these years that I have been able to give. Though I have mentioned the names of the ministers and deacons and spoken of some of their doings, I can go no further. I know nothing of the sermons they preached and the prayers they offered, nothing of the convictions, the reformations and experiences which attended their labors. By no method of

*About the year 1805, Mr. Ingalls published a book of sacred music, of which most of the tunes and many of the hymns were composed by himself. The hymns especially are exceedingly quaint, and have such local and personal allusions as to render them somewhat amusing. Only a very few copies of this book are to be found in town at the present time.

§Ministers in the Episcopal Church.

computation can I tell what the word of life as held forth by this church, has done for individuals, for families and for the world in these one hundred and twenty-five years. But of this I am sure; it has every year nurtured childhood, moulded maturing youth, supported old age, comforted bitter griefs, illumined the darkness of death, and carried souls up to a blessed immortality. Its line also, has doubtless gone out through all the earth, and its words to the end of the world. There is a thrilling chapter of the history of the church, that can be read only in yonder burial place of our dead, where the fathers and the mothers, and the faithful of many generations are resting from their labors. These many friends sleeping there, we surely must count most blessed of all who have entered the fold, and dwelt in the courts of our Zion, for their toils and sorrows are ended, their burdens, borne for the Master are laid down, their struggles with temptation and sin are over, and they are dwelling now in the heavenly mansions. Go, some summer evening, to that hallowed place, where your thoughts so readily run back over the past, and so willingly entertain the hopes of the future, and in the stillness of the hour, you will hear the sweet message of the spirit: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

The evident lesson enforced by this imperfect review of the "days of old," is that of obligation both to the past and the future. Though chiefly concerned with present duties and relations, we are yet acting in the line of those who have gone before us, and for the welfare of those who shall come after us. We stand in a goodly line. "Other men have labored and we are entered into their labors." We have committed to us a most sacred trust. It is ours to carry forward towards completion the work our father's begun, to give greater vigor and efficacy through our lives, to the truths upon which they builded, and in our measure, to hasten the coming of our

Lord's kingdom throughout the world. And when we do this in true christian fidelity, laboring for Christ and his church, we shall honor the generations that are past, and bless those that are to come. Then when we finish our course and rest from our labors, our works will follow us, and at heaven's gate we shall hear the blessed welcome: "Well done good and faithful servants."

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